



# Vincent Smith School Alumni Newsletter

January 2010

Volume 1, Issue 5

## From the Head of School ~ Arlene Wishnew



Dear Alumni of Vincent Smith School,

Once again it gives me great pleasure to wish you all a happy and healthy New Year. 2010 promises to be as exciting as ever at Vincent Smith School.

We are in the process of going through our 10 year self-evaluation with New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS). Needless to say that this self-evaluation helps us reflect on all the progress the school has made since we were first accredited with NYSAIS in 1989. We are busy preparing our report and making arrangements for the NYSAIS visiting committee's arrival on Sunday, March 7, 2010.

I am proud to report that we have been able to offer more scholarship/financial aid assistance to our families. This year we received a grant from the Kellogg Foundation in the amount of \$360,000, over a three year period, in scholarship aid. In addition, a \$200,000 gift was generously given by two alumni to our scholarship fund.

As always, your emails and letters are welcome. It is so rewarding to hear of each of your accomplishments. Although you have left Vincent Smith you will always be part of our school.

Please think of Vincent Smith School often. Your support truly makes a difference in the lives of today's students.

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### VSS Alumni Increase Their Commitment to VSS and Donate a \$200,000 Gift to Establish Family Scholarship Fund

Brothers, Arthur and Gilbert Geoffrion, have set up the "Geoffrion Family Scholarship Fund" at VSS to offer scholarships to students with financial need. They originally established the Geoffrion Family Scholarship during the 2008-2009 school year. It encompassed a \$30,000 commitment at \$10,000 per year, over the course of a three-year period. After fulfilling their 3 year commitment they generously increased their gift. The Geoffrion brothers established the Geoffrion Family Scholarship Fund, which will positively affect the ability of future students to attend Vincent Smith School. The Fund, a designated Board endowment, will generate income from the principle gift of \$200,000. The interest received from the principle gift will be used to fund scholarships in perpetuity.

Arthur and Gilbert attended VSS in the 1940's and 1950's as their Primary School and have many fond memories of those formative years. One of their favorite events at Vincent Smith was Field Day and both Art and Gil served as Master of Ceremonies. It was a fun-filled day of outdoor activities and its long standing tradition still holds true today. Below are some photos of Art and Gil and their classmates enjoying VSS Field Day.



Arthur Geoffrion circa 1948



Gilbert Geoffrion circa 1956

# VSS Past Happenings

Welcome to the fifth edition of the VSS Alumni Newsletter – a chance for all of you to find out what’s going on at the Vincent Smith School as well as what’s happening with past VSS alumni. To stay in touch with what’s going on at VSS, we encourage you to log on to the School’s website at [www.vincentsmithschool.org](http://www.vincentsmithschool.org). You will learn about many of the exciting events that have occurred or will be taking place at the School. We have made numerous building renovations and will be exhibiting the “History of Vincent Smith School” at the Port Washington Library for February 2010. We just completed our 20<sup>th</sup> year of visiting the Rocking Horse Ranch! Each year we hold a Lecture Series and a Special Education Fair for the community. Take a look at what else is happening at VSS!



## Scholarship Brunch Honors Ken & Ellen Forrest

Ken & Ellen Forrest, were our honorees this year at the Scholarship Fund Fashion Show Brunch held on March 29, 2009 at the Brookville Country Club. Ellen and Ken have been patrons of VSS for almost 15 years. Ellen Forrest serves on the VSS Board of Trustees and, for the last 8 years, has been Chairperson of the Board. Ken is a partner in the law firm of Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen and Katz. The Forrests actively participate in and support numerous philanthropic endeavors and have worked tirelessly for Vincent Smith School and its students. Their son Craig is a VSS graduate. Pictured above, from left, Councilman Wayne Wink, Board member Peri Zausner, Ellen & Ken and Board member, David Dickman.

## Whole Foods Market at Manhasset Contributes to VSS Scholarship Fund

In September, Vincent Smith School was the grateful recipient of Whole Foods Market of Manhasset’s 5% Days. VSS extends special thanks to Whole Foods Market and Marketing Team Leader, Karen Greene, for recognizing the extraordinary efforts of the School and its positive impact on the community. Below, Karen Greene presents a check for \$4,569 to Head of School, Arlene Wishnew and Director of Development, Debra Galinsky.



## Ice Hockey Legend Mike Bossy is Guest of Honor at VSS Sports Awards Dinner

Hall of Famer Mike Bossy was recently the guest of honor at the Vincent Smith School Sports Dinner. His keynote speech was to the point, filled with great memories and extremely motivating for everyone in attendance. The dinner was held at the Swan Club in Glenwood Landing. This annual event recognizes the athletic achievements of VSS students in basketball, soccer, softball and volleyball, and raises money for the School’s sports program.



## VSS Students and Faculty Walk to Raise Money

A successful Walk-A-Thon through the town of Port Washington was held in October of 2009. VSS received outstanding proclamations from the Town of Hempstead and Nassau County recognizing Vincent Smith School’s more than 85 years of service to the Long Island Community. Event sponsors included Astoria Federal Savings, Whole Foods Market at Manhasset, Sullivan’s Quay of PW, Arena Sports & Graphics and Ben’s Kosher Deli. This year’s honorees included Whole Foods Market of Manhasset and former PTA Co-President, Mrs. Patricia Loester.

## Alumni Class Notes

### Did You Know that...

**Emily Mondshein-Calkins** ('70-'75) lives on the West coast and just recently moved into a larger home to spend more time with family and friends. She would love to reconnect with VSS Alum and faculty from 1970-1975...**Coryn Brown** ('03-'09) currently attends Concordia College and is contemplating a career in News Media... **Shannon Crimauco** ('00-'06) graduated from New York Institute of Technology's Vocational Independence Program and resides in Westchester County...**Sara Crescas** ('84-'93) is an EKG Technician...**William Hal Davis** ('69-'77) works in Washington, DC at the National Archives & Records Administration... **Robert Eckstein** ('97-'00) resides locally and is working in the mental health field as an Alcohol & Substance Abuse Counselor... **Todd Geyer** ('68-'70) has just recently moved back to the East coast and works for a brokerage firm. He has been married for 22 years and has 2 children attending college... **Meaghan Huber** ('00-'07) is currently attending Mitchell College and was recently inducted in the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. She will be graduating this May with a Liberal Arts degree concentrating in Early Childhood. She is also working on her certification in dog grooming...**Tim Kliphuis** ('76-'80) resides locally and owns his own business. He also has 2 children currently attending college... **Patty Loester** ('02-'09) is currently attending Lesley College in Cambridge, MA...**Aaron & Vanessa (nee Leff) Lurie** ('94-'97) recently celebrated their fifth wedding anniversary and have 2 children, Merissa and Alexander Jacob...**Regine Mevs** ('96-'04) resides locally and works at a Cardiologist's office...**Julie Ann Ramos** ('80-'84) works with ABC Television as a consultant and producer for a new TV show. She has started a celebrity styling company and has a clothing line, that debuted recently at NYC fashion week, and is featured at Barney's and Los Angeles, CA stores...**Robert Reidy** ('00-'06) attends Fairfield University and plans to go in to the Criminal Justice field...**Jacob Schepsman** ('03-'09) attends Castleton State College and is majoring in math and considering becoming a math teacher...**Evan Schwartz** ('05-'08) will be graduating from the University of Hartford and transferring to SUNY New Paltz and majoring in Accounting. He also enjoys traveling... **Alex Whitman** ('04-'09) is currently attending Nassau Community College and works at a private school in Lawrence, NY...**Kimberley Wolk** ('89-'94) resides in Vermont and is a Veterinarian Technician...**Lisa Zirinsky** ('57-'63) currently resides in Maine and cherishes both her education and time spent at VSS...**Michael Wolf** ('80-'81) is happily married and has twins, Justin and Rachel. He works locally for a restaurant equipment manufacturer in the marketing department.



### VSS Alumni and Family Organize Massive Humanitarian Relief Effort in Haiti

Waring Partridge ('51-'52) and his wife Carmen immediately took action when they saw the devastation in Haiti. They organized volunteers, including doctors, nurses and paramedics from all over the US and the Virgin Islands, and began flying medical professionals and supplies into earthquake-stricken Haiti. The Virgin Island Haitian Medical and Children's Relief Trip began its first flight on Jan. 16<sup>th</sup> when a chartered plane from St. Thomas landed in Port au Prince with a medical team of 12 volunteers from the Virgin Islands and 2,200 pounds of donated medical supplies. On the ground, they established operations and immediately began treating patients en mass. At the end of a month, about 1,000 lives had been saved by this effort. All this was made possible by over 100 volunteer medical professionals and enormously generous people and companies who donated 25 airplane flights and hundreds of thousands of dollars of medical supplies. If you would like to find out more information or help with this extraordinary effort please visit their website at [www.ushaitianrelief.org](http://www.ushaitianrelief.org).

### Our VSS Website Has a New Look!

We have been working hard to revitalize our VSS website and search engine optimization. We encourage you log on to our new site and check it out for yourself. Just log on to [www.vincentmsithschool.org](http://www.vincentmsithschool.org) and click on the Alumni link. Don't forget to go to the [Alumni Profile](#) and update us with your contact information and what you have been up to. We look forward to hearing from you! If you have any questions or comments please contact Debra Galinsky, VSS Director of Development at [dgalinsky@vincentmsithschool.org](mailto:dgalinsky@vincentmsithschool.org).

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### GET INVOLVED with VSS!

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cash Donation</li><li>• Corporate Matching Gifts</li><li>• Appreciated Securities</li><li>• Memorial and Honoring Gifts</li><li>• Bequests and Other Planned Gifts (life insurance, charitable gift annuities, etc.)</li><li>• Donate Goods or Services (for use as raffle prizes - such as TVs, autos, hotel weekends, airline or theater tickets)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Volunteer to Serve on the Special Events, Development or Alumni Committee</li><li>• Donate free advertising for VSS through your media contacts</li><li>• Through your celebrity contacts help VSS with special fundraising events</li><li>• Join the Alumni Association or become a Class Rep</li></ul> |
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The Vincent Smith School is dedicated to providing a small, nurturing and supportive setting for the reluctant learner and learning disabled student. At Vincent Smith we are committed to the beliefs that:

- It is Okay to Learn Differently
- Reluctant learners and learning disabled students are provided the necessary educational, emotional and social support that will enable each student to reach their highest potential and become productive members of our global society